

In the new commonwealth those of us who wish to retain allegiance to His Majesty can do so with such allegiance unimpaired. At the same time it has proved possible for a republic to remain within the group by the acceptance of the King as the symbol of the free association of the members of our commonwealth of nations, and as such the head of the commonwealth. In this connection, possibly it would not be inappropriate to refer to a former member of the commonwealth which has adopted the republican form of government and which has followed a course opposite to that chosen by India. I refer, of course, to Ireland, a country which gave the ultimate proof of the independence and freedom which exists in the commonwealth by exercising its right to leave it. Inasmuch as the members of the commonwealth recognize the full sovereignty of each other and the authority of each to conduct its policy in both its domestic and external affairs in the manner of any other foreign state, no member of the commonwealth would, I think, seek to criticize in any way the action taken by the government of the Republic of Ireland. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I think most Canadians were disappointed at the decision that the Irish government found it necessary to take to break those special formal ties which Ireland had with Canada and with the other members of the commonwealth. There is, of course, no need for us to assure the Irish people of the continuing warmth of the friendship the Canadian people have for them to assure the Irish government of the desire of the government of Canada to co-operate with it in any useful manner.

The changes that have now taken place within the commonwealth naturally give rise to questions concerning their effect on its future. To the citizens of other countries, Mr. Speaker, it must often seem difficult to appreciate the organization or what might more accurately be called the lack of formal organization of the commonwealth. Certainly, the commonwealth of today is vastly different from the British empire of not so many years ago. I believe most people feel the difference is an improvement. Political and economic factors have produced many changes which, in my own opinion, have not only been to the advantage of the individual members but of the commonwealth as a whole. For example, no longer can there be any suggestion that the public opinion of the vast sub-continent of India is denied full expression in our commonwealth. Now, each Asian member of the commonwealth, and there are three, speaks through its own independent, democratically chosen government. In this way alone, not only has the composition of the commonwealth changed, but so has the nature, if you will, of its institutions, and the very nature of its being in a sense. But the change has provided a bridge between the east and the west and has given an opportunity of being of great service to the world.

Once again, the commonwealth has proven its ability to adapt itself to these changing conditions, something I venture to think--there may be disagreement over this--it could not have done if it had, in earlier times, decided to organize its activities in a fixed, formal and centralized manner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, may I leave the commonwealth and say a word or two about our relations with the United States.

The United States

...In so far as our relations with the United States are concerned, it is, of course, Mr. Speaker, obvious that two great and active nations like Canada and the United States cannot live together without being confronted each other with new problems in their relationship. The way and the spirit in which we set about the solution of our mutual problems must continue to stand as an example of the way in which relations should be conducted between free states. That example would be spoiled if we were to admit failure to find mutually acceptable solutions to our own problems. To avoid such failure, careful and constant attention, respect, and informed understanding on both sides are necessary. Relations between states, like marriages and friendships, do not survive on neglect.

Canada and the United States, I suggest, cannot take their relations with each other too much for granted. Both must continue to direct intelligence and good will towards the solution of any problem. We in Canada must not, I think, be oversensitive in our relations with the United States. We must also